

Oral History Cover Sheet

Name: Woody Canaday and Tad Pfeffer

Location of Interview: Randolph, New Hampshire

Interviewer: Steve Chase

Brief Summary of Interview: Woody Canaday and Tad Pfeffer both worked for the Randolph Mountain Club on trail crew and on hut crew. Woody was born in Buffalo, New York on June 18, 1952. His father was a minister and then later became the Director of the Council on Aging and his mother was a pianist and taught at the New England Conservatory. Woody grew up in Arlington, Massachusetts, attended a private school in Massachusetts before going on to Harvard and eventually going to Stanford for business. He currently works as a consultant for financial services.

Tad was born in Boston, Massachusetts on June 4, 1952 and his father was a pediatrician in Boston and later on in Wellesley, Massachusetts. Tad got his GED went on to get his under graduate degree at the University of Vermont, later got his Master's at University of Maine and his PhD at the University of Colorado. Tad has remained in Colorado where he lives with his family.

Both men worked together on the trail crew and then in the huts. They both share stories about being hired, what it was like on the trail and hut crew, whether they felt they were prepared for everything they had to do, and some of the duties they performed. They also share experiences that they had while working at the RMC and meeting some interesting people. They also discuss how they feel youth can be engaged in outdoor activities and the difference of how life was like when they were younger as compared to today's youth. Both men seemed to have really enjoyed their time working at the RMC and it has affected their life in some way.

Steve: First for the transcriptionist I need you to each say your name and spell your names.

Woody: Okay. I'm Woody Canaday that's my nickname, Woody is, WOODY. Last name Canaday, CANADAY.

Tad: And I'm Tad Pfeffer, it's TAD PFEFFER.

Steve: Great. Can you each tell me your birthplace and your date of birth?

Woody: Birthplace Buffalo, New York June 18, 1952.

Tad: And I was Boston, Massachusetts June 4, 1952.

Steve: Can you each tell me just a bit about your parents, what they did?

Woody: Sure. My folks built a house in Randolph, New Hampshire about 1954, '55. My dad was a minister at the time and he later became the Director of the Council on Aging in Melrose, Massachusetts. My mother was a pianist and she taught piano at the New England Conservatory for about fifty years.

Tad: My father was a pediatrician, initial in Boston later in Wellesley, Massachusetts until he retired. They came to Randolph in the—about 1950, they were on their way to Vermont they stopped at the Mt. Crescent House overnight and they never left.

Steve: That's a common story.

Tad: Yeah.

Steve: Let's see—just tell me for a bit about what you did when you were a kid, outdoor stuff.

Woody: Oh this was heaven up here. We had this new cottage and everything from just going to bush racking in the woods down below to building a tree house with the Bradley's and then extending the tree house and hiking and going down to the pond here or down to Gorham pond. Going up and visiting friends, I'd just walk through the woods and go visit friends and hang out with them. It was just, it was paradise, it was absolutely amazing.

Tad: And I, I had, I started coming up here when I was two and my parents didn't own a house here, we rented a house, we rented a different house every year for the first five or six years that I was here so I can actually date my memories very precisely because they're associated with different houses and my parents would tell me what years they rented those houses. So I actually have memories from when I was two in certain houses (unintelligible) house (unintelligible) 1966 something like that but, but, but life was very much the way Woody described it and we knew each other (unintelligible, Woody talking at same time), not well at all until we met in trail crew in 1968.

Steve: Okay. Can you tell me a bit about your education, where'd you go to high school?

Woody: I went to Belmont Hill School, a private school in Massachusetts.

Steve: Okay. And Tad.

Tad: I went to a variety of high schools, which I managed to foul up each one of them, eventually never graduated from high school got a GED and then went on from there.

Steve: Okay. Can you tell me about your college work?

Woody: I went to Harvard right after high school and studied the classics when I was there and rowed; that was my life.

Steve: Graduate school?

Woody: Graduate school I went to, after working for five years, I went to business school at Stanford.

Steve: Tad.

Tad: And I got my, I got my GED and so then my folks (unintelligible), I discovered through Don and Barbara Wilson who you may have already heard of they were people that were second parents to many people here. Don Wilson at that time, this was 1972, was a, he was a special assistant to the president at University of Vermont and he told me about a special education, not special education, continuing education program where you could come in as a student and take courses but you weren't a matriculated degree student. So I went over there, took classes, it worked and after a semester I was admitted, I had school figured out at that point so I got through, I graduated from UVM and then after taking; I took another couple of years off after going to the University of Vermont, worked as a climbing guide, carpenter, various things, went on to graduate school at the University of Maine got a MS there and a PhD at the University of Washington and then moved to University of Colorado and I've been there ever since.

Steve: You just answered what I was going to ask about occupation so Woody what do you do now?

Woody: I'm a consultant to financial services firms so I traveled some of that but it's New York, it's London, it's been all over the world with that. Consulting to them on how they're dealing with their institutional customers.

Steve: Okay. Now we get to the fun stuff. Tell me about your, why did you want to work for the RMC? That's the first one.

Woody: Well if you love the place anyway (chucking) the opportunity just came up, I'm not even sure I was asking for it, I think my brother was interested and then he had something else come so I kind of feel like I substituted for him. And somehow I was allowed into the trail crew even though Klaus Goetze had considered me scrawny and too small when he first saw me the previous summer. But that's how it all began in '68, why not when you can work in Randolph. (Chuckling) That was just a great thing to keep doing.

Steve: Can you tell me what your RMC jobs were?

Woody: Well in '68 was the first year the RMC greatly expanded its trail crew to include three people instead of two and so part of the trio that's missing here is Hank "Thumper" Folsom, Henry Folsom Jr., and so we three were the trail crew. We were tasked with clearing all ninety miles, roughly, of the RMC trails and...

Tad: Hundred miles.

Woody: ...hundred miles.

Tad: (Unintelligible, talking at same time) you've probably haven't seen the book, the book of one hundred miles of trails.

Woody: I remember it as ninety maybe (unintelligible) extended. And so that was our task, was basically clearing just brush, blow downs and so on. And somehow we got assembled and under Klaus's guidance, and Tad will tell lots of good stories about this, we had I think it was really within about a six week period, I think by the end of July we were, we were completed. And, you know, we had I think it was a bit of an innovation as well to be carrying the chainsaw...

Tad: That was in the sec...

Woody: ...which you ...

Tad: In the second year.

Woody: ...carried. Yeah. So we went beyond just the hand sickle and saws and so forth.

Steve: That's what I did in '87. We called it a "assault trail crew" cuz or before we had the chainsaw.

Tad: As a side here, there are a number of different things, which I have written up, that have appeared in the newsletter and also in Judy's book and I don't know if you want to skip over some of those things or include them in here or not.

Steve: Probably better just skip over them.

Tad: Okay, okay.

Steve: Because we can reference that. I want to know what really happened.

Tad: Well actually those were pretty good stories. I had, I always, I had the expectation that I would work in the trail crew and in the huts and that was, at that time there was a tradition; there were enough kids of in sort of our immediate cadre of ten years younger, ten years older that there was a long period where there was always a steady supply of local kids and of course at that time it was all boys. The first, I think that the first woman on the trail crew or in the huts was Betsy Rising in 1975 or something like that. But the first time that I went up to Crag when I was 7, maybe, I remember Johnny Stevens. And I had just this expectation that some day that I would do it and then yeah I got to fourteen

or fifteen and I, I'd done some volunteer work and Klaus would, he would, he'd send out people and sort of test them, see how they would do. I think he was looking for strength of character whether they, you know whether they could handle an axe without chopping their toes off. But yeah I had applied and I remember a certain you know breathless waiting for the letter from the RMC. And then we'd found out that there had been three applicants and I guess the (unintelligible) all three (unintelligible, Woody and Tad speaking at same time) I got the news that they hired all of us. But the second year that we worked, so this was the winter of 1969, which was a very, very heavy year and there was a lot of damage on the forest and that was the year that they broke down and we got our first chainsaw cuz we had a lot of large blow downs. The other thing, which is very different then, then now, is that we were primarily just patrolling, we were just getting debris out of the trail. The kind of trail engineering, staircase building and so forth that has, you know the primary occupation the trail crew now, we did next to none. We would occasionally do a little bit of that, we'd put in water bars but it was very informal, we weren't trained in it, they were structures that we only expected to last for a few years.

Woody: Right and done often on our own option as supposed to be directed to.

Tad: Yeah. Yeah Klaus's main task in supervising us was, was trails and (unintelligible) what did they look like, what should we do next. And he had a, he had a sequence of things that he wanted to have done that were based on which trails were used most, which trails he had reports needed some work. But primarily we were simply getting things out of the way; this was before the real trail preservation movement got underway in the RMC at least. I think at that time in the AMC, this was about the time that Bob Proudman was coming through the AMC trail crew and he was one of the people who really got it started there.

Steve: Sure he wrote the book. Yeah he lives down where I work now.

Tad: Oh okay.

Steve: In Shepherdstown.

Tad: But it hadn't really, we knew a little bit about it but it hadn't rubbed off on us.

Steve: Actually I still, we still gotta keep going on, on all the different jobs so...

Woody: Well we had trail crew for the two years.

Tad: '68 and '69.

Woody: '68, '69 and then the following year we were candidates to be hut boys at camps. And so Tad and I were both selected to do that and I ended up with I guess it was Crag at first or was it the other way around?

Tad: No you were at Gray Knob at first and I was at Crag and the second year we swapped. But Henry was the third person that stayed on; he did a third year in trail crew. Which I had forgotten but looking at Judy's notes, I saw that and again this was something that was so part of the routine you would do two years in trail crew and then you'd do two years in the huts. So it was something that we expected to do and were looking forward to.

Steve: Did you guys feel prepared for what Klaus asked you to do?

Tad: Yeah I'm sure.

Woody: I wouldn't say that I knew what was expected cuz I hadn't been groomed in the right thinking like Tad was, probably Klaus had his eye on you for a couple of years because of your height and strength and so forth and then again I was scrawny little pickle so it was a matter of whether I would keep up but it's manual labor. It's a lot of heavy lifting and cutting and so forth.

Tad: And we'd been around on of the trails, we knew what was, you know, we knew what was involved.

Steve: That's one of the questions too, you felt at home in the woods and on the paths and on the mountains?

Tad: Oh yeah, yeah completely.

Woody: As long as we had a lot of fly dope.

Tad: And we'd done a certain amount of volunteer work, I had, I worked packing shingles especially up to Crag during the '64, '65 rebuilt of Crag, that was a major renovation of the old, the old hut and I think they were paying twelve cents a pound or something.

Woody: There was also a sense of some project that was going on at the RMC that required some, something to be done.

Steve: We were getting paid thirty-five dollars for every sixty pounds. So we would do a hundred and twenty pounds and get seventy dollars a run...

Tad: Fifty cents a pound.

Steve: ...and we'd do it in less than two hours. And it was damn good pay, that was 1982.

Tad: I think, I think that our pay started out as a dollar thirty-five an hour I think we were paid, something like that.

Woody: When we were....

Tad: Good money.

Woody: Fifty dollars a week (unintelligible, load noise.)

Tad: Yes it was a salary position of course we were there twenty-four hours a day.
Yeah fifty dollars a week sounds right.

Steve: I'll kind of bounce around between the caretaker and the trail crew work, go to a couple of questions and then just ask you guys to tell some stories. What was a typical day for work in trail crew? You've talk about you were clearing but I mean, would you always start on the bottom and head up to wherever you were going to work or...?

Woody: Almost always, there were some multi-day or overnight trips we would take, not too many the were mostly day trips I recall and you know once or twice we'd stay at the Crag or Gray Knob when we were doing the upper trails.

Tad: We didn't do any of the business of staying out on a camp. We either stayed at Crag, sometimes at Madison.

Woody: Right.

Tad: Or we'd work from home. And at that time there was no, you know, Stern's Lodge or Jones Cottage we each lived in our houses because again at that time all, all the trail and huts people lived here.

Steve: Yeah.

Tad: So they all had places to stay. So we weren't together necessarily in our off hours, we'd each stay at our respective families.

Woody: Although there was a period of time I stayed at your...

Tad: House.

Woody: ...yeah in (unintelligible) when my parents were away. We would actually, typically, very often we'd meet at your house as I recall, Thumper would come down and we would take off go to the trail. And for us interestingly Thumper bought a car from Lowe's Garage or his parents bought him car for four hundred dollars, an old Chrysler Imperial with a push button automatic transmission. And this thing had a very capacious trunk into which we could throw this gargantuan pack that was a wooden pack that you used to carry the chainsaw.

Tad: The wicker saw, the wicker (unintelligible).

Woody: ...and all the other packs and all this other (unintelligible), it was, it was an incredible beast. And so that, so that was part of the lore was taking this huge creature down to the start of the trails and off we go.

Steve: And there's been talk today about the huge loads that you would carry.

Tad: Oh yeah, yeah garbage can story.

Woody: But that was, that was a hut's story. That was when the Forest Service I guess said it was time to empty out the old garbage dumps and you know a lot of things we had to do because of the USFS around that time that included changing toilets right, was that around that time?

Tad: This is what we have to get rid of, the old....

Woody: I'll take that.

Tad: A lot of the older people told you about that the outhouse at Crag that was perched on the edge King Ravine.

Steve: Yes.

Woody: And then people would come from all over the world.

Tad: Just to see the outside. It was a magnificent place. It was just wonderful.

Woody: You did have to worry about falling over while you were using it.

Tad: The Forest Service at that time they were going through, they might have called it (unintelligible) composting but the idea was they would move the toilet from place to place.

Steve: Right.

Tad: Of course the problem with that there is that when you cut the access, that's so disruptive that if you keep, if you do that if you cut a new path every two years you're you know making a huge mess of it so they gave up after a while. But well there was two things of them was the outhouses and the other one was just you had to clean up the trash. And at that time there were, there were a couple of, one thing was that the, there was the old Crag slide, which you're remember from the eighties cuz it was still visible, it's still kind of visible. But...

Steve: We used to drop down in the winter, best way down to the bottom of the ravine fast.

Tad: And for many years people through trash over the ravine, particularly bottles and cans.

Steve: Yeah John Tremblay use to go down there and dig around looking for stuff.

Woody: Archaeological evidence.

Tad: There was also a, well it was called a can pit and these were common...

Woody: Right.

Tad: ...in huts, it was just to the west of the camp that was actually a shallow pit that at one time was roofed over, was border over it was like a tent platform and had a little trap door on it. The, the wooden structure eventually rotted away and one of our tasks was to bag this stuff up and over the course of the summers that we were there, get ride of it. And I remember up to about sixty, seventy pounds, it really didn't feel like we were carrying packs, so accustomed to that weight so we were always caring loads...

Woody: Right.

Tad: Always.

Woody: But at the end of the summer when it wasn't all done and we finally got to (unintelligible) the bottom of the barrel, my recollection is, you took the barrel.

Tad: That was, that was...

Woody: Or was that a different time?

Tad: I don't know if, I don't know if it was end of the summer or not. I don't remember exactly when it was but beside this, this can pit was this fifty-five gallon oil drum and it had been there for ages and it was full to the brim full of wet garbage and I guess I had my eye on it for awhile but I, I'd turned the thing on it's side and drain as much water out of it as I could and tied it onto a you know a **AMC** pack frame.

Woody: Yeah I remember this very clearly.

Tad: And, well it's actually this is one of the very interesting things about it is that my recollection is that there was one person with, you may have been at Crag, but I went down with one person and there are at least three people that remember having gone down with me. (Some laughing and speaking at same time). My recollection, I think it this is right, it was with Jeff Bean who went with me.

Woody: That sounds right, yeah.

Tad: But anyway I tied this thing on and got up underneath it and it was obviously really heavy but I didn't know how much. And I thought well I can walk around with this and so I started down, Jeff with me, which was essential cuz I could not stand up nor sit down without being, without losing control. And we worked our way down and I remember it took six hours to get down and I stopped six times and each stop was a major operation getting down and standing back up again. The other thing that I remember is getting out to the highway and, you know there's that, that feeling when you're like you know like a first crossing or something and you're, you know you're down a long way but you're not there yet so it's still you know you're not, you're not sort of going to relax then, you're not done. I was like at the **power line** and I still, I felt like just like that, I'm just not done yet. I was halfway across the **power line** and I'm still not done yet, I was not done until I got to the highway. I finally dropped the thing, took it to Lowe's...

Woody: And weighed it.

Tad: ...and weighed it and they had a deer scale there, they may still it's a standard thing...

Steve: Yeah, **maybe** a deer check station.

Tad: Right, yeah a deer check station, you have to register your deer. So it was two hundred and five pounds (unintelligible) scale. And I don't know, I have no recollection of what happened at the camp.

Woody: Just left it there.

Tad: Presumably it went to the Randolph dump, which was still open at that time but Lowe's had a picture of me. I think they actually, I put it on once more at the gas station so they could, they could take a picture of me. But yeah everybody remembers that (laughing) and everybody went down.

Woody: Well you know I, there's a totally different story that I'm sure you're remember cuz you had two cats that you brought up for (Aurora and Borealis, speaking at same time). And they ended up doing a real job on the rabbits under the, under the hut pretty awful at one point. But at the end of the summer it was time to take them back down and my recollection is we popped them into...

Tad: Pillowcases.

Woody: ...pillowcases (unintelligible).

Tad: Well they fussed for a bit and then they fell, then they fell asleep.

Woody: I guess for a while, yeah.

Tad: They were, they were wonderful, they were wonderful cats, they were the best cats I ever had and yeah there were a lot of stories about them. They would follow people and they would, they'd get up above timberline from time to time. They'd follow people up the Spur Trail and they'd follow somebody else down and one time one of them went all the way down to the valley with somebody.

Steve: Wow.

Tad: And somebody, whoever it was, took the cat up to the Mt. Crescent House and gave it to Jack Boothman. And Jack knew who's cat it was and you know when we went down there the next time he gave it back to me. But he was, he was saying this woman who brought it in, she was so upset. Said this cat, said she found it starving in the woods. Jack (unintelligible) you know "It needs some food, it needs some" you know "it needs first aid!" And Jack saying "Don't worry about the cat, that's fine just leave him right there." And she says, "This cat was so hungry, IT HAD TO EAT A MOUSE!" (Laughing) But they were, they were very happy cats. They loved that place. My day at Crag, this is something which has actually influenced me for years, in the morning, at that time there was no separate sleeping area...

Steve: Yeah.

Tad: ...for the caretaker.

Steve: Well there was...

Tad: There was a closet.

Steve: ...there was a little closet.

Tad: It was a storage closet.

Steve: Yeah.

Tad: But it sleep out and traditionally the bed that the caretaker sleep in was the one that was next to the organ, which was in the, you know the plan of the cabin was very roughly the plan of a new cabin and the organ was actually tucked right into the northwest corner and then there was a bunk right beside it.

Steve: That was my favorite bunk whenever I'd sleep at Crag.

Tad: Yeah. And...

Steve: I slept better there than anywhere.

Tad: Yeah, it was a good place, good place to sleep. But you know I'd get up and people would, people would be up in stages and milling around and the best part of the day for me was when they would finally all leave and I would clean the cabin. And I had this routine of getting things cleaned up and the part that I really remember the best was I would close all the windows so there wouldn't be any wind. Get all the chairs and bunks up and sweep the floor and it was, it was this ceremony for me, it was done very particular every single day and I really think that that's influenced me ever since then in how I take care of houses. I'm always fussing about sweeping the floor and washing the dishes and there are other things I just don't care very much about.

Steve: What was your high point, Woody, when you were in the cabins?

Woody: It's funny I was, you know when you ask about a routine that's the thing I definitely remember is cleaning up in the morning, it was just getting it ready and dealing with the oddities of both of those spaces they were just wonderful, corky (unintelligible) places and trying to keep those things clean was, was part of the lure. I remember at Gray Knob the, the wire that was necessary to keep the, the food from being eaten by the red squirrels and it did no good cuz they chew right through it. And you could see stuff taken away when you'd come back from a trip; you could see the wire cut through by their teeth and so on.

Steve: We made a blowgun from a tent pole and we hung their little dead tails on the wall.

[Laughing]

Woody: Those squirrels are so cute but...

Steve: Yeah I know.

Woody: ...personalities are so strong.

Tad: Do you remember the through hiker that came that came through and he wrote a book about it earlier, you (unintelligible).

Woody: I did, we did?

Tad: (Unintelligible).

Woody: No I don't.

Tad: And I can't remember his name but this was at a time when there were not that many books about walking the Appalachian Trails, it's a pretty well known book. And this guy was trying...

Steve: Was that Ed Garvey or?

Tad: Yeah,

Steve: Yeah.

Tad: Yep, yeah Garvey yeah. He showed, this was the second year you were at Crag, and he showed around dusk and I remember he was miffed because he'd seen the sign at

Thunderstorm Junction for Crag and said “Well let’s go there instead” not knowing that’s you know a little more than a mile away and there was no sign at that time indicating how far it was and so he was bothered by the fact that you know you just did this long detour that he was unprepared for. But he wrote the whole thing up in the book about this very memorable stay and Woody was the caretaker.

Steve: I’ve got that book in my bookcase I think...

Tad: Well take a look at it.

Steve: ...check it out. It is twenty after so...

Woody: Oh yeah well I was going to say I mean when we had the free time just being able to take little excursions (unintelligible) tree line or trips here and there, a little bit of bouldering here and there were just great, great things yeah.

[Unintelligible, speaking at same time]

Tad: Oh trail crew.

Woody: We had to deal with, we had, I’ll get to that, we had to deal with of course the black flies and the flies, the horse flies (unintelligible) the deer flies, which was entertaining in a lot of ways, we’re all entertaining the crew in our own ways but I do remember one occasion you claimed you killed seven of these in one blow sort of like a great woodsmen’s hero. We were on Crescent, Mt. Crescent, at one point and Thumper was working the hatchet and clearing a small log which turned out to be rotten and the hatchet went through into his leg and just put a gash into his leg and we were up at the summit. Not a lot of blood but definitely not a good thing for the whole and I think you ended up carrying him a lot of the way down, as I recall.

Tad: I don’t, I don’t think so.

Woody: (Unintelligible).

Tad: But yeah he was, his, his, his main recollection was oh he's cut his leg and he had something to bandage it up with but we bandaged it up and then we sat down and we got out our lunch, meatloaf sandwiches with plenty of ketchup. He was unhappy with us for a couple of days.

Steve: You guys were really engaged in the outdoors and Randolph and you worked these jobs and today we have a lot young people that never had any experiences outside, they're not engaged in the outdoors, they're not engaged in nature, they're engaged in computers and their parents won't let me outside because the (unintelligible) news is saying that's its dangerous and.

Woody: Yeah, right.

Steve: I just like to ask you how, how can we engage young people so they can appreciate the outdoors and have a connection with nature and hopefully become the next generation of conservation leaders that we desperately need?

Woody: I find it hard to believe that parents who live in this area, (unintelligible) you're probably referring more to in a city like suburbia.

Steve: Yeah I'm being pretty general but, but the study shows that the majority...

Woody: Yeah well I think it's a general, recent fear that's taken place based on, you know, probably on how you can play on reality. And the technology has come along and created these great distractions, it's very true. Camps, you know, that people are invited to, make them available (chuckling) make it a **band date** I don't know, everybody has to spent a week at a camp somewhere and be in the outdoors. But there's a lot of things that can be done in urban life too I think, I think of you'd read you know about urban gardening that's taking place some of these roof and (unintelligible) organic gardening

and ecological systems inside cities, it's possible to have these connections if you have really visionary people and people who engage in making these things happen.

Steve: Do you have hope for the future, Tad, from your students?

Tad: Oh yeah and from my kid as well and to answer you're earlier question I think that, you know, if we can, if we can raise our kids you know the way we were raised, which not everybody can do but when you can't I think it still works. I mean my kids have roughly comparable experiences to ours partly here but mostly we live in Colorado, we live in the mountains outside Boulder it's a place where it's, it's like this in the sense that you could go out your back door and, and go into the mountains and go for a long way without, you know, you're in the woods, you're an anonymous. And both of my kids were very comfortable in that environment from an early age in the same way that we were. So it can still be, it can still be done I think it's, you know it's primarily the attitudes of the parents.

Woody: Well I think technology has made a difference for sure I mean we when were growing up at the beginning telephones were party lines. People would actually, still at that point if they wanted to come visit you and they didn't see you they'd leave a message, people would have little notepads outside their houses (unintelligible) came by to visit or can you come by such and such time to do this and I mean it's a lot more physical involvement in going to see people and do things.

Steve: I remember we use to rent the Meiklejohn's extra house there all through the nineties and early in the nineties it was still a party line.

Woody: Yeah.

Steve: I remember that.

Tad: Where we live in Colorado we had a party line (unintelligible).

Steve: Did you guys have any wildlife, interesting wildlife experiences? Ever see interesting critters, beyond the rabbits under the cabin?

Woody: I don't remember seeing anything, unusual creatures.

Tad: Not much, on that side of the highway there's comparably little wildlife or was at that time. This side yes and after I worked for the RMC, I worked for several years as a surveyor out here on this side of the national forest and saw quite a lot here. But I don't remember, I don't remember much except for the various...

Woody: I'd say indirectly but they would be what ever was being served up at the Saturday night buffet at the Mt. Crescent House, (unintelligible) don't know if it was a bear that was shot then it would be on their, on the menu. Or a moose that had been hit, it was on the menu.

Tad: We had, they vary, were vary on the way of exotic wildlife that you would encounter either on the trails or at the huts.

Steve: I had one experience on Lowe's at 1:30 in the morning on one of our fun night hikes and in my headlamp beam I caught a Canadian Lynx in the middle of the path.

Tad and Woody: Oh wow.

Steve: And it let me look at it for two seconds before it jet. That's the only time.

Woody: What a sight, what a sight. That's the time, that's the time of day you'd have to be out.

Steve: Yeah, yeah. Well you're running out of time so do you have anything else you'd like to say.

Woody: No, it's just a lot of fun to remember these things. A very formative experience, it has been four years doing this and it's, it's hard to describe but you've been through it so (chuckling) you know what, what a great thing it is (unintelligible).

Tad: Yeah.

Woody: And it just makes you connected, feel connected forever.

Cynthia: Curlers.

Woody: What about curlers?

Cynthia: Hikers coming up with curling irons.

Woody: Oh sure. Well we would have these inexperienced groups come up to the camps, as you can imagine, church groups, thirty people arriving after dark when the camp is already full. Sent them over to Gray Knob.

[Laughing]

Tad: Actually has anybody talked about the maximum number of people we've had in the hut?

Steve: Some people have.

Tad: What numbers have you heard?

Steve: John Tremblay and I hosted a Thanksgiving at Gray Knob in 1982 and we had 36 people in there.

Tad: That was, that was invited.

Steve: Yeah.

Tad: Right?

Steve: Yeah.

Woody: These are the unexpected?

Steve: Unexpected—yeah the Fourth of July crowds say or that unexpected double camp group shows up and my experience was I never turned anyone away but if there was no physical space left, it was down the Hincks Trail half a mile and head left and you're find a campsite or a tent site even though it wasn't there but that's what I'd say.

Tad: I had fifty at Crag one time.

Steve: Wow.

Tad: And it was one of these double camp groups, I was, you know, just pouring rain and the camps were, they were terrible at coordinated. They would never call ahead and (unintelligible) morning.

Woody: And the things they would bring, the hair curlers expected they'd be able to plug in somewhere.

Steve: I remember writing in the log that every time a camp group comes they'd break a window. Every time. But, but it was so good to see the camp groups.

Tad: Those were, those were the kids that were—for many of them was it really, really different experience. And I remember particular this one group that came up and kid, a

kid took a drink, this is like of course we were there when the old Crag was there and it was water line that came right up to the kitchen and faced east into the ravine. And he poured a cup of water and he drank it and he says, "Man that's, that's so cold it's like it just came out of the refrigerator." And most people, most people would, you know, take a glass of water out of the refrigerator, "This taste just like it came out of a mountain stream." His reference was a cold refrigerator. And you saw a lot of that.

Steve: Yeah I remember one camp group of intercity kids and they; some of them didn't even have shoelaces on their sneakers. And they were so excited to be there and they had a great time and they had really had very little so it was a pleasure to have them (unintelligible).

Tad: There's one other, have you got time for?

Woody: Go ahead.

Tad: Remember Joel Orent?

Woody: Joel?

Tad: Orent. I think you were there, this was the first year I was caretaking at Crag. And one early afternoon I heard this commotion down the Spur Trail a ways, it sounded like there may be a (unintelligible) at Crag or something it's just two guys, they were working way up and it's all kind noise, clattering and talking. And it went on for like an hour and they finally loomed up under the porch and this guy name later turned out to be Joel Orent, climbed up onto the porch with this tremendous (unintelligible) pack and it turned out he had (unintelligible), it's the first 4 x 5 I've ever seen.

Steve: Wow.

Tad: And he's a photographer and he was up to take pictures. And he spent; I think they might have been there for two nights. And I ended up spending a lot of time talking to this guy, he was a, I don't know if he was, I think he may have been a Rabi, he was Jewish anyway. And very informed and thoughtful and articulate about religion, talked a great deal with him about religion. But, so as soon as he arrived he started pulling out this junk out of the pack including all the camera and I carry a 4 x 5 round and I used to carry 4 x 5 round and that was it by itself is about (unintelligible) pounds. Anyway got all that stuff out of the pack and then he pulled out a box of powder milk and he says, "Nothing better after a long hike then a glass of cold milk." And as it happens powder milk was one of those things that just, just really gave me the creeps I just could not stand powder milk, it was just the worst the thing. And this is like, you know, man up (unintelligible) "Glass of powder milk, why don't I prepare you a glass of milk." So I, I was going polite so "Sure I guess so." And so he makes me a big glass of milk and so now I'm obliged to drink it and so he fixed this thing and it's obviously just up its and I prepare myself and I get everything else out of my mouth and take a couple breathes so I don't have to breathe and I managed to finally get it down and I then I try not to breathe from my nose for awhile so I don't have to taste the powder milk and he said "I see you like it, let me make you another glass."

[Everyone laughing]

Tad: But he was this, he was this wonderful guy and he sent me some pictures later and I think he, I think he influenced my interest in photography and it turns out he's still around and now that we can google people. He's probably in his nineties now but he lives in Brookline and you can find references to him, he's still a photographer and he's still very much involved in religion but he's one of the people that I remember best in various different (unintelligible). Very cool.

Steve: Well we could go on for hours, I'd like to thank. We've done 40 minutes and that's pretty good.